

JONI K. ERNST  
STATE SENATOR  
*Forty-eighth District*  
Statehouse: (515) 281-3371

HOME ADDRESS  
910 N Sixth St.  
Red Oak, IA 51566

joni.ernst@legis.iowa.gov



## The Senate

STATE OF IOWA  
*Eighty-fourth General Assembly*  
STATEHOUSE  
Des Moines, IA 50319

### COMMITTEES

Local Government  
Transportation  
Veterans Affairs

Administration and Regulation  
Appropriations Subcommittee

August 5, 2011

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

I am writing about the 11-65 proceeding regarding AT&T's application to merge with T-Mobile. I support this merger for very specific reasons.

Access to the wide array of information, services and entertainment that the Internet provides is becoming essential for our citizens. Whether you are seeking a job, trying to find the best price for a product or service or simply communicating with friends and family – the Web is becoming a vital resource for our nation.

In order to take advantage of it, however, people need a device and an accessible network. Smartphones, tablets, and mobile broadband networks are the tools being adopted in record numbers. Nevertheless, the most advanced device in the world will be useless without a network that has the capacity and speed to support it. For too long, many towns in western Iowa, especially in my district, have only had access to the Internet through a satellite connection. This is outdated technology and often the only choice for our local businesses and consumers. I suspect that much of small-town, rural America is in the same situation.

Mobile broadband needs to be extended to these areas in order to help them thrive, and it is unrealistic to think that this will happen solely at the hands of government. AT&T is offering its financial strength to build out the necessary infrastructure for LTE wireless networks across America, including rural areas, with the approval of this merger. Government needs to ensure that firms like AT&T and T-Mobile have the ability to combine in order to accelerate Iowa's – and America's – access to high-speed mobile broadband, which will lead to greater economic growth and quality of life in our communities.

I support this merger for these reasons. I hope you will too, and approve it with as little delay as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joni Ernst".

Joni Ernst  
Senator, District 48  
Iowa General Assembly  
copies to:

Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Commissioner Michael Copps  
Commissioner Robert McDowell  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn